

# Editing 101

Grace Zhang:

Throughout this upcoming year, I hope to write an empirically-based thesis which addresses the question: **Since September 11, 2001, how and why has American foreign policy evolved towards the Arab world by means of democracy promotion?** And, has the United States' support for democratic institution-building in countries such as Egypt played a role in the development of protest movements throughout the Arab world? I will seek to determine the validity of the hypothesis that *the US is increasing its efforts to democratize and liberalize the Arab world due to the belief that democratic, liberal Arab governments are beneficial to America's strategic interests in the region. Furthermore, such democracy promotion efforts helped bring about the Arab Spring.*

**Let's focus attention on Grace's central research question:**

Since September 11, 2001, how and why has American foreign policy evolved towards the Arab world by means of democracy promotion?

## **1. Simplify: Break up the questions**

Since September 11, 2001, how ~~and why~~ has American foreign policy evolved towards the Arab world by means of democracy promotion?

Since September 11, 2001, ~~how and~~ why has American foreign policy evolved towards the Arab world by means of democracy promotion?

## **2. Simplify: Drop the first question and focus on the second. (The second question can't be asked unless foreign policy has changed.)**

~~Since September 11, 2001, how has American foreign policy evolved towards the Arab world by means of democracy promotion?~~

Since September 11, 2001, why has American foreign policy evolved towards the Arab world by means of democracy promotion?

## **3. Simplify. The details of foreign policy change can come later. Drop the cause "by means of democratic promotion".**

Since September 11, 2001, why has American foreign policy evolved towards the Arab world ~~by means of democracy promotion?~~

**4. Connect the “towards the Arab world” with its referent “foreign policy”.**

Since September 11, 2001, why has American foreign policy towards the Arab world evolved?

**5. Drop the time frame.**

~~Since September 11, 2001,~~ why has American foreign policy towards the Arab world evolved?

**6. Break in two. Assert change. Simplify the question.**

American foreign policy towards the Arab world has evolved [or in a more active tone “is evolving”]. Why?